MINE AND THINE

BY

FLORENCE EARLE COATES

Inscribed
Sent to R. R. L. Oct. 1926

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By Florence Earle Coates

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BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

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MINE AND THINE

TO

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

Dear Mr. Stedman:—

The first volume of my published verse was inscribed to the memory of Matthew Arnold; I count myself happy that I am permitted to dedicate this book to you, whom, equally, it has been my privilege to know, to love, and to honor.

F. E. C.

Willing Terrace, Germantown,
Philadelphia.

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MINE AND THINE

SONG OF LIFE

MAIDEN of the laughing eyes,
Primrose-kirtled, winged, free,
Virgin daughter of the skies —
Joy — whom gods and mortals prize,
Share thy smiles with me!

Yet — lest I, unheeding, borrow
Pleasure that to-day endears
And benumbs the heart to-morrow —
Turn not wholly from me, Sorrow!
Let me share thy tears!

Give me of thy fullness, Life!
Pulse and passion, power, breath,
Vision pure, heroic strife, —
Give me of thy fullness, Life! —
Nor deny me death!

BROOK–SONG: TO THE SPRING

O BEAUTY! vision of forgotten gladness!
Fulfillment of a dream that ne'er betrays!
O miracle of hope, and balm of sadness!
Creative ecstasy and fount of praise!

. . . . . .

I lay upon the ground and gave no token,
I hid my face mid sodden leaves and sere,
My languid pulses chill, my spirit broken, —
I knew not, O divine one! you were near;

For snows and frosts of winter, new-departed,
Still held my will in thrall and weighed me down;

And I forgot — forlorn and heavy-hearted —
Your promise, goddess of the violet crown!

But soft as music in remembrance sighing,
You fanned me with your wooing breath, and I,
Who shed no tears when lone I seemed and dying,
Wept at your touch, and knew I should not die.

Now by my banks are tender blossoms blowing:
In fragrant loveliness they smile on me, —
But I must hasten to the river, knowing
The river leadeth ever to the sea.

High over me the budding branches quiver
With songs that swell in happy harmony;
But sweeter is the murmur of the river, —
The river that leads ever to the sea!

WHEN CHRIST WAS BORN

On that divine all-hallowed morn
When Christ in Bethlehem was born,
How lone did Mary seem to be,
The kindly beasts for company!

Yet when she saw her infant's face —
Fair with the soul's unfading grace,
Softly she wept for love's excess,
For painless ease and happiness.

She pressed her treasure to her heart —
A lowly mother, set apart

In the dear way that mothers are,
And heaven seemed nigh, and earth afar:

And when grave kings in sumptuous guise
Adored her babe, she knew them wise;
For at his touch her sense grew dim —
So all *her* being worshiped him.

A nimbus seemed to crown the head
Low-nestled in that manger-bed,
And Mary's forehead, to our sight,
Wears ever something of its light;

And still the heart — poor pensioner!
In its affliction turns to her —
Best loved of all, best understood,
The type of selfless motherhood!

"GO NOT TOO FAR"

Go not too far — too far beyond my gaze,
Thou who canst never pass beyond the yearn
ing
Which, even as the dark for dawning stays,
Awaits thy loved returning!

Go not too far! Howe'er thy fancies roam,
Let them come back, wide-circling like the swal-
low,
Lest I, for very need, should try to come —
And find I could not follow!

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

LIFE laid upon his forehead a caress,
And, smiling, gave him for his birthright dower,
Humor and judgment, passion, purpose, power,
And gifts of vision, pure and limitless:
Then — for she ever tempers man's success,
Nursing the canker in Earth's fairest flower —
She added pain; and taught him, hour by hour,
To know that only blessed which doth bless!

So, following the Gleam from early youth,
He lent a strengthening hand, and gave his heart,
And aided feet, less sure than his, to climb:
He sacrificed not others to his art,
But worshiped beauty with unselfish truth,
And lives, the well-beloved of his time!

INTERCHANGE

THE oriole sang in the apple-tree;
The sick girl lay on her bed, and heard
The tremulous note of the glad wild bird;
And, "Ah!" she sighed, "to share with thee
Life's rapture exquisite and strong:
Its hope, its eager energy,
Its fragrance and its song!"

The oriole swayed in the apple-tree,
And he sang: "I will build, with my love, a nest,
Fine as e'er welcomed a birdling guest:

Like a pendent blossom, secure yet free,
It shall hang from the bough above me there,
Bright, bright with the gold that is combed for me
From the sick girl's auburn hair!"

Then he built the nest in the apple-tree;
And, burnished over, a ball of light,
It gleamed and shone in the sick girl's sight,
And she gazed upon it wonderingly:
But when the bird had forever flown,
They brought the nest from the apple-tree
To the bed where she lay alone.

"O builder of this mystery!" —
The wide and wistful eyes grew dim,
And the soul of the sick girl followed him —

"Dear bird! I have had part, through thee,
In the life for which I long and long:
Have shared its hope, its energy,
Its rapture and its song!"

BETROTHAL

BOTH your hands? . . . What mean they, dear?
I, unworthy, — dare I claim you?
Then, against the world, I hold you:
Mine — forever mine!

Men have waked from dreams of joy:
Teach me to believe this rapture!
Lift your eyes! O my beloved,
Let me read your heart!

Is it true? . . . Ah, me! those eyes!
How divinely kind! — how tender!

Doubt itself could not distrust them,
Or resist their light!

Dear, without you, I have been
Poorer than the humblest beggar
Who against your door at nightfall
Kneeling, asked for bread:

I have gazed upon your face
And have felt such fear oppress me
That I trembled. From this moment,
Nothing fear I more!

For whatever perils come,
Nothing henceforth can divide us;
Neither follies nor ambitions —
Neither joys nor tears:

Never can you go so far
That my love shall fail to find you;
Seeking ever to deserve you,
Upward striving still;

And though seas should lie between,
I shall feel that you are near me:
In the twilight and night-season
I shall hear your voice.

"ASK WHAT YOU WILL"

Ask what you will, I must obey your hest!
Thus much, my lady-bird, seems manifest
To you and me, who well each other know;
What you, small tyrant, beg, I must bestow.
Come; falter not, but proffer your request!

Is it the flower I wear here on my breast?
My favorite nag? The book I love the best?
Some dainty gown? Some brooch or necklace?
No?
Ask what you will!

See how the sun, down-sinking to his rest,
Gilds with his glory all the roseate west!
I linger on, in life's chill afterglow.
Nay; smile, beloved! — like your mother — so!
Stay but a moment! Now — my own! my blest!
Ask what you will.

DREYFUS

France has no dungeon in her island tomb
So deep that she may hide injustice there;
The cry of innocence, despite her care, —
Despite her roll of drums, her cannon's boom, —
Is heard wherever human hearts have room
For sympathy: a sob upon the air,
Echoed and reëchoed everywhere,
It swells and swells, a prophecy of doom.

Thou latest victim of an ancient hate!
In agony so awfully alone,
The world forgets thee not, nor can forget:

Such martyrdom she feels to be her own,
And sees involved in thine her larger fate;
She questions, and thy foes shall answer yet.

AS FROM AFAR

To see thee, hear thee, wistful watch I keep —
Mother, who in immensity dost dwell —
A child who listens for the boundless deep,
Her ear against a shell :

And vainly though I seek thy face to scan,
Lost in the vasty temple where thou art,
Faint breathings of thy voice æolian
Vibrate against my heart.

CORONATION—TO KING EDWARD VII

If thou be crowned, or if thou be not crowned
With that imperial round
Thy forbears from the distant ages wore,
Sorrow and suffering for thee have earned
A guerdon fairer than thy hope discerned;
And through renunciation, thou hast found
A cirque of sovereignty not dreamed before.

If thou be crowned? Nay, thou art crowned now;
For, lo! upon thy brow,
So lately shadowed by Death's mournful wing,
A mighty people's sympathy has laid

An aureole whose brightness shall not fade:
Whose light, more worth than chrism, or seal, or
vow,
Sceptre or throne, makes thee, indeed, a King!

PERSEPHONE

THE wild bird's first exultant strain
Says, — "Winter is over — over!"
And spring returns to the wold again,
With breath as of lilac and clover.

With a certain soft, appealing grace
(Surely some sorrow hath kissed her!)
She gives to our vision her girlish face,
And we know how we 've missed her — missed her!

For on a day she went away,
Long ere the leaves were falling,

And came no more for the whitethroat's lay,
Or the pewee's plaintive calling:

In tender tints on her broidered shoon
Blossomed the leaves of the myrtle,
And silky buds of the darling June
Were folded up in her kirtle;

And fair, fair, fair, in her sunlit hair
Were violets intertwining,
That seemed more fresh and unfading there
Than when with dewdrops shining!

She hid them all in her dim retreat:
But, heart! a truce to sighing;
She 's here — incomparably sweet,
Unchanging and undying!

We see her brow, and we rejoice,
  Her cheek, as it pales and flushes,
We hear once more in her thrilling voice
  The note of the woodland thrushes;

And through her lashes, tear-empearled,
  A mystic light is breaking,
And all the love of the whole wide world
  Seems in her eyes awaking!

PICQUART

For love of justice and for love of truth —
Aye, 't was for these, for these he put aside
Place and preferment, fortune and the pride
Of fair renown; the friends he prized, in sooth,
All the rewards of an illustrious youth,
And set his strength against a swollen tide,
And gave his spirit to be crucified —
For love of justice and for love of truth.

Keeper of the abiding scroll of fame,
Lo! we intrust to thee a hero's name!
Life, like a restless river, hurrying by,

Bears us so swiftly on, we may forget
The name to which we owe so deep a debt;
But guard it thou, nor suffer it to die!

TRANSITION

AWAKE, my soul!
Thou shalt not creep and crawl —
An earth-bound creature, pitiful and small,
Whose weak ambition knows no higher goal!
O wistful soul,

When morning sings,
Forgetful of the night,
Bathe all thy restless being in the light;
Till 'neath the mesh that close about thee clings
Thou feel thy wings!

Then find life's door, —

Trusting the instinct true

That points to Heaven and the aerial blue

A wingèd thing, impelled for evermore

To soar and soar!

PILGRIM SONG

Written for the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of Pennsylvania

PILGRIMS of the trackless deep,
Leaving all, our fathers came,
Life and liberty to keep
In Jehovah's awful name.
Neither pillared flame nor cloud
Made the wild, for them, rejoice,
But their hearts, with sorrow bowed,
In the darkness heard His voice.

Things above them they divined —
Thoughts of God, forever true,

And the deathless Compact signed —
Building *better than they knew:*
Building liberty not planned,
Law that ampler life controls,
All the greatness of our land
Lying shadowed in their souls.

In the days that shall succeed,
Prouder boast no time shall grant
Than to be of them, indeed,
Children of their Covenant:
Children of the promised day,
Bound by hope and memory,
Brave, devoted, wise, as they —
Strong with love's humility.

AUTUMN

In her arms unconscious lying,
Cytherea's love is dying.
On the hill and in the valley,
Through the grove and sun-lit alley,
Drooping flower and fading leaf
Share her grief.
But in realms of gloom and night
Persephone enwreathes her hair,
And a gleam of tender light
Seems to pierce the darkness there:
"Ah!" she sighs, "I long have waited
With the calm of hopeless pain,

But to me, the sorrow-fated,
Comes the lost one back again!
Lovely things that seem to die
Hither now will quickly hie,
And to-morrow, in the gloom
Of this sad and sunless tomb,
Butterflies will lightly hover,
As o'er meadows fair;" she saith,
"For Adonis brings the clover
With his breath!"

TO POVERTY

PALE priestess of a fane discredited,
Whose votaries to-day are few or none;
Goddess austere, whose touch the vulgar shun,
As they would shrink from a Procrustes bed,
Hieing to temples where the feast is spread,
And life laughs loudly, and the smooth wines run;
Wise mother! — least desired 'neath the sun,
At thy chill breasts the noblest have been fed.

Great are thy counsels for the brave and strong;
Yet do we fear thy brooding mystery,

The griefs, the hardships, which about thee throng,
The scanty garners where thy harvests be;
But seeing what unto the rich belong,
We know our debt, O Poverty, to thee!

THE DIFFERENCE

HAD Henley died, his course half run —
Had Henley died, and Stevenson
Been left on earth, of him to write,
He would have chosen to indite
His name in generous phrase — or none.

No envious humor, cold and dun,
Had marred the vesture he had spun,
All luminous, to clothe his knight —
Had Henley died!

Ah, well! at rest — poor Stevenson! —
Safe in our hearts his place is won.

There love shall still his love requite,
His faults divinely veiled from sight,
Whose tears had fallen in benison,
Had Henley died!

OLD ST. DAVID'S

"What an image of peace and rest." — LONGFELLOW

Written by request of the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames of America and read at Old St. David's, May 21, 1904

In Radnor Valley, from the world apart,
The little Church stands peaceful as of old,
Guarding her memories, yet half untold,
Deep in the silent places of her heart.

Life comes, and passes by her, as it wills;
But musing on loved things evanishèd,
She keeps the generations of the dead, —
Herself unchanged amid her beauteous hills:

Unchanged, though full of change her days have
been,
Since builded here, ere Washington was born,
She seemed the *home* of exiled hearts for-
lorn —
The open portal to hope's fair demesne.

Close as the ivy that adorns her walls,
So grateful thoughts have twined themselves
and clung
About this lowly sanctuary, sprung
From that necessity which ever calls

The soul of man to seek for something higher, —
Anhungered for a more celestial bread
Than that wherewith his earthly life is fed, —
And faith was kindled here, and patriot fire !

Yea; from this sacred pile, in days gone by,
Brave men, to duty nobly dedicate,
Went forth to strive against despotic fate —
For liberty content to live — or die.

Some came not back; but some returned, victorious, —
Needing nor badge nor ribbon on the breast, —
To find here, by the little Church, their rest:
Heroes and martyrs lowly — yet how glorious!

Healed of all hurt, emparadised afar
Though they abide, yet to our reverent sight,
About their graves there lingers still a light
Which is not as the light of moon or star;

And very peaceful after stormy days,
And sturdy as the antique oaks remain,

Which sentineled the burial of Wayne, —
Illustrious beyond the need of praise, —

Old Radnor Church bestows her benison,
Calling to us who from the past yet borrow,
To love the right, and living for the morrow,
Fulfill the hopes of heroes that are gone.

So, through whate'er of change the future brings,
Shall she our memories and faiths defend, —
A temple of the highest to the end,
Immortal through the love of deathless things!

THE RETURN[1]

WHO knocks at the door so late, so late —
Who knocks so late at the door?
Is it one who comes as a stranger comes,
Or one who has knocked before?
Is it one who stays with intent to bless,
Or one who stands to implore?

My days have been as the years, she said,
And my heart, my heart is sore;

[1] "Romney, the painter, married at nineteen and had two children in 1762. He visited them only once, in 1767. When old, nearly mad, and quite utterly desolate, he found his way back to his wife in 1799, and she, after the neglect of nearly forty years, received him with forgiveness and kindness, affectionately nursing him till his death; an act, as has been said, which, even from an artistic point of view, is worth all his pictures."

Love looked in my face for a moment's space
One happy spring of yore —
Looked in my face with a wistful grace:
And left me to grieve evermore!

Through all the days the door stood wide,
For hope had breathed a vow
That love should ne'er be kept outside.
The years were long and hope hath died;
The door at last is barred and fast —
Why comes this knocking now?

Yet woe the waiting heart, she said,
And the heart it waiteth for!
And woe the truth and wasted youth
That nothing shall restore!
The faith that's fled, the hope that's dead,
The dreams that come no more.

Who knocks at the gate — so late, so late?
Thou foolish heart, be still!
What is 't to thee if love or hate
Knocks in the midnight chill?
Art thou, poor heart, compassionate?
Is love so hard to kill?

Ah me! the night is cold, she said;
Would I might all forget;
But memory lives when hope is dead,
And pity heals regret;
As light still lingers overhead
When sun and moon are set.

TO HELEN KELLER

LIFE has its limitations manifold:
All life; not only that which throbs in thee,
And strains its fetters, eager to be free.
The faultless eye may not thy vision hold —
Maiden, whose brow with thought is aureoled —
And they who hear may lack the ministry,
The august influence of Silence, she
Who brooded o'er the void in ages old.

Prisoner of the dark, inaudible —
Light, which the night itself could not eclipse,
Thou shinest forth Man's being to reveal.

We learn with awe from thine apocalypse,
That nothing can the human spirit quell,
And know him lord of all things, *who can feel!*

MADONNA

He gazed, the little vagrant lad,
On the Madonna's gentle face;
And all his wistful visage sad
Renewed its infant grace:
He gazed, reluctant to depart,
Then kissed her, shyly, as he stood —
Ah, wondrous Art! his lonely heart
But yearned to motherhood!

I KNOW NOT HOW TO FIND THE SPRING

I know not how to find the Spring,
Though violets are here,
And in the boughs high over me
The birds are fluting clear;
The magic and the melody,
The rapture — all are fled,
And could they wake, they would but break
My heart, now you are dead.

A BALLAD OF A DRUM

The Austrians at Arcola
(The fight had lasted long),
The Austrians at Arcola —
Some fifty thousand strong —
Assailed the bridge whereto the French
(A fourth their strength) had come,.
With menace dire, and murderous fire;
Then fled before a drum!

For Estienne at Arcola —
Heroic little lad! —
Seeing the carnage on the bridge,
With soul grown sick and sad,

Had sworn that he, at least, would pass
  Beyond the sanguine tide,
And beat his drum, whate'er should come,
  Upon the farther side.

So Estienne at Arcola —
  No fear had he to die! —
With one brave Sergeant, swam the stream,
  His precious drum held high,
And from the river dripping rose
  Amid the battle's hum,
A French refrain, with might and main,
  To pound upon his drum.

The Austrians at Arcola
  Seemed fifty thousand strong,

But many were the raw recruits
  Among that mighty throng,
Who hearing Frenchmen in the rear,
  Listened, confused and dumb,
Then gave a shout, — "We 're hemmed about!"
  And fled — before a drum!

The courage shown at Arcola
  By André Estienne —
The lesson taught at Arcola
  Is wholesome now as then.
Needs there a moral to the tale?
  Then read in this its sum:
The greatest strength may yield at length,
  When sounds a hero's drum!

TO WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Tell us of beauty! Touch thy silver lyre
And bid thy Muse unfold her shining wings!
Tell us of joy — of those unaging things
Which wither not, nor are consumed of fire,
Things unto which the souls of all aspire!
Sing us the mystic song thine Erin sings,
Her poignant dreams, her weird imaginings,
With magic of thy "Land of Heart's Desire!"

Let others hate! — from lips not thine be hurled
Reproaches; since all hate at last must prove
Abortive, though it triumph for a while.

The gospels that indeed have won the world
Laid their foundations in the strength of love.
Sing thou, a lover, of thy wave-washed Isle!

CRIPPLED

WHY hast Thou bound my feet,
Then bade me toil ceaselessly after Thee?
How should a thing so broken, incomplete —
Ah, how should I, Lord! plant these faltering feet
Where shifting sands of Earth so baffle me?

Have I not set thy limits? Who should know,
Better than I, what sloughs I lead thee through?
Mine is the power to hinder — and make free:
Walk thou with me!

TO ENGLAND

We are not twain, but one: though seas divide us —
The children of the English-speaking race —
This nothing now can change: whate'er betide us,
This is our *birthright* grace.

The tongue that holds our earliest recollection,
Whose accents moved us like a fond caress —
The tongue in which we lisped our first affection,
Must still attach and bless.

America and England knit together —
Offspring of one great Mother, Sister Lands —
Fear neither frowning fate nor boding weather,
When close are joined their hands.

Beneath the ocean-billow sways the cable
That gives them instant knowledge, each of each,
And were it sunk, their hearts would still be able
To find a way of speech.

The younger, who her virgin prairies planted
To bless the alien — Teuton, Latin, Gaul,
Welcomes the poorest, as to realms enchanted,
And makes them English, all!

And still, the elder, in the hour of danger,
The bond of kinship never quite forgot,

Speaks with commanding accent to the stranger:
"Be heedful; touch her not!"

For we have felt — have felt with one another,
Sharing each other's hope, each other's dread;
And we have wept, as children of one mother,
Mourning our cherished dead.

Is 't for ourselves this friendship hath caressed us —
That Heaven hath strengthened so the English speech?
Nay; God forbid! the mercy that hath blessed us
Hath a diviner reach!

If with new strength there come not larger kindness,
Our banners, proudly borne, were better furled;

If we no longer see, for selfish blindness,
Beyond our realms, the world, —

Then poor, indeed, though vast our rule supernal,
Who magnify the ill we might redeem;
Missing the glory of the hope eternal —
The god-like, human dream!

To solace life, there blooms on earth a flower
Whose deathless name is Love. Of its increase
Are born compassion, freedom, beauty, power;
And of its gift is peace.

O Sister Lands, thrice blest! though wisdom guide us,
Yet in our hearts may love perfected lie —
Deep as the ocean that cannot divide us,
Kind as the arching sky!

BEETHOVEN

He cursed the day when he was born:
And deaf and desolate,
Resolved, in bitterness forlorn,
To end his hapless fate.

But as the deeper silence grew—
An exile from the throng,
His yearning spirit voices drew
From *inner* founts of song;

And he who called unfriendly death
To calm rebellious strife,
Won from his own despair the breath
Of an immortal life.

AT THE SARAH-BERNHARDT THEATRE

NOTHING that man's creative mind hath wrought
Is wholly foreign to the mind of man:
He looks before and after; in his span
Of life infinities of life are caught, —
Brooding, mysterious, and travail-fraught, —
And near and distant answer, as they can,
Enkindled at the flame Promethean
Of world-embracing, heaven-illumined Thought!

Last night a woman played in Paris here
The rôle of *Hamlet*, each distinctive grace,
By genius all-subduing and sublime,

Made native in an alien land and time,—
As though she, listening with accustomed ear,
Had learned of English Shakespeare, face to face!

"I LONGED FOR LOVE"

I LONGED for love, and eager to discover
Its hiding-place, I wandered far and wide;
And as forlorn I sought the lone world over,
Unrecognized, love journeyed at my side.

I craved for peace, and priceless years expended
In unrewarded search from shore to shore;
But home returned, the weary seeking ended,
Peace welcomed me where dwelt my peace of yore!

IN WINTER TIME

How sweet it is 'neath apple-blooms to lie,
And breathe their breath!
To peep through waving branches at the sky,
To feel the zephyrs as they idle by,
And question of the brooklet what it saith!

How sweet it is to roam through the green wold
When labors cease!
To hear the tranquil tale by Nature told —
The tale that was not young, and grows not old —
To find within the heart an answering peace!

And though apart from Nature we maintain
An alien quest,
How sweet that we shall leave the strife and strain
Some blessèd morn, and wander back again,
And close our eyes, and in her bosom rest!

AN OPTIMIST

"O AGED man, pray, if you know,
Now answer me the truth! —
Which of the gifts that the gods bestow
Is the greatest gift of youth?

"O aged man, I have far to fare
By the divers paths of Earth,
Which of the gifts that with me I bear
Is the gift of the greatest worth?

"Is it the might of the good right arm,
Whereby I shall make my way

Where dangers threaten and evils harm,
Holding them still at bay?

"Is it the strength wherewith I shall climb
Where few before have trod —
To the mountain-tops, the peaks sublime
That glow in the smile of the god?

"Is it the never-failing will,
Invincible in might,
Which armed against oppression still
Shall vanquish for the right?

"Or is it the heart, thou aged man! —
The heart, impassioned, strong —
Which shall be blest, as naught else can,
In perfect love ere long?"

The old man smiled: the listening breeze
Grew whist on the sun-lit slope;
The old man sighed: "Ah, none of these!
Youth's greatest gift is its hope."

JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

GREATEST of modern painters, he is dead! —
Whistler, in whom death seemed to have no part:
He of the nimble wit and jocund heart,
Who sipped youth's nectar at the fountain-head,
And felt its wine through all his veins run red:
Who worshiped the ideal — not the mart,
And blessed the world with an imperial Art,
Whereby who longs for beauty may be fed!

When things men deem momentous are forgot,
Laurels will bloom for him that wither not;

And Death's inverted torch shall fail to smother
The light of genius, tender and sublime,
Which with austere restraint, and for all time,
Painted the gentle portrait of the "Mother!"

MY DREAM

THOUGH full of care
I tread the round
Of toil in which man's eager life is bound,
I faint not 'neath the load I bear;
For grievous though the burden sometimes be,
I dream of thee!

And when, at night,
I lie enwound
In silence that is sweeter than all sound,
The darkness, kindlier than light,

Shuts out the busy world awhile, and free,

I dream of thee!

Like to a breath

Of fragrance blown

From some shy blossom, hidden and alone,

Redeeming frost and wintry death,

So ever comes, like scent of bloom to me,

My dream of thee!

Like to a star

Amidst the clouds,

When angry tempest hurtles in the shrouds,

And darkling drifts the mariner afar,

So, out of storm and shadow, beams on me

My dream of thee!

CIVILIZATION

OLD as the race of man,
Young as the child new-born,
From glooms Plutonian
I mount to paths of morn;
And as I move o'er vale and hill,
Before me flees the night,
For on into the darkness still
I bear my light.

The desert stayed me long
Its fancied worth to tell;

The savage, subtle and strong,
Opposed me, and he fell:
But the savage learned from conflict past
To battle and succeed,
And the foolish desert came at last
To bloom indeed.

I halt not for the maimed,
I wait not for the blind;
My foot is never lamed,
Whoe'er may lag behind:
I hasten on, like the wind of God,
To the conquest He ordains:
Parting the human from the clod,
Undoing chains.

The thing that hindereth
My progress as I pass,
Is withered in my breath
Like parchèd summer grass.
I hasten on, like the wind of God,
That must unfettered blow,
Wooing the blossom from the sod
Where'er I go.

I taught the Hindoo throng
To worship: I awoke
The Pyrrhic phalanx strong,
To break the Persian yoke:
I set great Pharaoh's captives free,
The Tarquin's pride down-hurled,
And in a child of Galilee,
O'ercame the world!

ALMS

A BEGGAR, bent beneath the weight of years,—
To wretchedness inured, half reconciled,—
Entreated help, and I could give but tears;
Yet grateful looked the man on me, and smiled.

PARIS

WHEN to thee, Trojan — firebrand of the night,
Whom Hecuba, in fear, to Priam bore —
The choice was given which should calm restore
To vexed Olympos, thou didst spurn the right
Of regal sovereignty, and the grave might
Of godlike wisdom, — so renouncing more
Than e'er was offered to a man before, —
In poor exchange for sensual delight.

Thy fame is an undying infamy ;
And the great city that hath fairest bloomed
Thine adolescent graces, — strangely she,
As if a name resembling thine foredoomed,
Maintains the standards that appealed to thee,
And by thy very vices is consumed.

UNREST

MAN that will not be beguiled
Like a fond and happy child
From his toil or futile strife,
Feels within his bosom burning
All the deep, impassioned yearning
Woven in the woof of life.

And though far, with weary feet,
He may wander, Man shall meet
No content until he come —
Soon or late, his fate compelling —
To Love's domed and star-lit dwelling,
For he has no other home.

"SO WAR HAS BEGUN"

So war has begun, they say:
Well, Spring is here before it;
If war takes much away,
And leaves us to deplore it, —
Yet see! the woody dells once more
Are turning green, in spite of war.

On yonder maple-tree
The misty buds are swelling;
Violets, timidly,
Peep from their mossy dwelling,
And bluebirds, far and near, outpour
Their brimming hope, in spite of war.

Rumor, with awful tales
  Of death and of disaster,
May clamor through our vales,
  But Spring comes hither faster,
Humming a tender rune of peace —
Breathing of bloom and life's increase.

Old soldiers still relate
  How at Resaca's battle, —
As if to compensate, —
  Above the din and rattle
Of musketry, continued long,
A mockingbird sang rapturous song:

And one who lay near death, —
  A soldier sorely wounded,

Drew less distressful breath,
  As clear that music sounded,
And felt to his tired spirit come
The most delightful dreams of home.

Ah, well! we talk of war,
  But peace is so much kinder,
That all our strife is for
  Is just the hope to find her:
And see! — how Spring, with look serene,
Is garlanding her halls in green!

UNITED

Our single lives are circled round
By an embracing sea;
Are joined to all that has been, bound
To all that is to be:
The past and future meet and cross,
And in life's ocean is no loss.

The music of the summer dawn,
The silence of the midnight sky,
The stars, in azure deeps withdrawn,
Reveal a single mystery:
And blent with these, the whisperings
Of spirit find each shy retreat,

And link the soul with viewless things,
In union close and sweet.

Failure itself may count as gain
In aspiration; paved with fire
May be the path that leads from pain;
And unfulfilled desire
May kindle that pure flame above
Whose earthly name is love!

PHILISTIA

She waits for man, and leads him artfully —
In seeming freedom that beguiles his will —
Unto the great wheels grinding in her mill;
And with a voice of suasive melody,
Entreats him: "Lo! all gifts I proffer thee —
All joys that adolescent hopes fulfill,
All riches that the old may covet still —
So thou wilt bow thee down and worship me!"

But list'ning her, the spirit that would live
Must hear, from far, a nobler message sent:
Distrustful most where most she seeks to please,

Unsoftened by her luxury and ease,
Must hope through higher things to find content, —
Toiling for triumphs which she cannot give!

AT EASTER

He saw the myriad blooming plants
That mark the hallowed morn;
He thought upon a lowly mound
In a far land, forlorn,

Where yearning love would never come
With token fond, though brief,
Where lonely love would never bring
Its heartache for relief.

When, lo! athwart his musings, came
Again that strange appeal

Which he had listened to before,
Without the power to feel;

And putting by a vain regret,—
His fallen foe to save,—
"Ah, love!" he sighed, "lost love!—I lay
This blossom on thy grave!"

DELILAH

EVERMORE I hear my name,
Blared upon the cruel street,
Echoed in my close retreat,
Breathing fame, and branding shame:
Evermore it mocks my dream.
Though I wear the purple fine —
All the pomp of Palestine —
Ravens over Gaza scream:
"Delilah!"

And when most I should be gay
For my triumph, — lo! my sight

Darkens in another's night,
And accusing voices say:
"Guile may lightly vanquish odds;
But though mortals pay the price
And accept the sacrifice,
Treason 's hateful to the gods,
Delilah!"

Samson! — bowing reverent knee
Unto Israel's God and thine —
Did'st thou think I loved not mine?
Unto him I yielded thee!
Yet — O mighty in thy fall! —
Groping still thy God to find,
Bond and bound, bereft and blind, —
Happier thou than she they call
Delilah!

A LITTLE MINISTER

FAR up the crag, 'twixt sea and sky,
Where winds tempestuous, blowing by,
Leave giant boulders swept and bare:
Where frequent lightnings fitful flare,
And petrels sound their stormy cry, —

I found a bluebell, sweet and shy,
Lifting its head complacently,
As guarded by the tenderest care —
Far up the crag.

And often now, when fear draws nigh,
In thought I stand 'twixt sea and sky,

And as of old, in my despair,
I bless the Power that set it there —
That tiny thing with courage high,
Far up the crag!

MY COUNTRY

BELOVÈD, thou hast triumphed everywhere!
Thou hast outgrown, men say, that selfless Right
Which bade thee for the weak expend thy might;
And as a giant strong, dost claim thy share
Of earth's rich conquest, and will naught forbear.
I listen, and behold, with grievèd sight,
Upon thy beauteous brow a baleful light,
And something sinister, new-written there.

O my belovèd! art thou changed, indeed?
Remembering thy birth and peerless dower,
Canst thou thine altars to Compassion find?
Ah, woe if thou deface them! set to feed
The unappeasèd lust of wealth and power
That leagues with the oppressors of mankind!

CRADLE SONG

THY heart and mine are one, my dear,
At dawn and set of sun;
When skies are bright, when days are drear,
Thy heart and mine are one!

About us move the hapless folk
Whom paltry things estrange;
The friends that feel their bond a yoke,
The loves that lightly change;

But thou and I, my bonny child,
Their dangers blithely shun,
Nor can by folly be beguiled, —
For thou and I are one!

SOCRATES

He raised the hemlock to his lips,
He drained the fatal draught,
Calmly conversing with his friends,
As he a wine had quaffed;
And, ah! what wine so rich to bless?
The torch of day grown dim,
Death's cup has less of bitterness
For all, because of him!

LOVE THAT FALTERED

Love that faltered for an hour
Had not felt the awful power
Of the god whom gods adore;
Of the god before whose portal
Kneel the deathless and the mortal, —
Suppliant forever more.

Love that faltered had not heard
Love's divine, compelling word,
Or it instant had obeyed;
Giving with the glad devotion
Of the river for the ocean, —
Doubting not, and unafraid.

For with Love alone is joy
Free from shadow of alloy;
And before his sacred shrine,
Sorrow, in her deepest sadness,
Guards a hope more blest than gladness,
And through worship grows divine!

IN PATHETIC REMEMBRANCE

E. N. W.

Author of "David Harum"

A DYING man, so say you, wrote this book?
Life is abundant here: from every page —
Cheerful, courageous, philosophic, sage,
With no repining and no backward look —
It flows, as healthful as the mountain brook,
That gathering scent of grape and saxifrage,
Makes joyous pastime of its pilgrimage,
Fresh'ning each pebbly bend, each mossy crook.

The story journeys to forgetfulness?
Truly: yet he who wrote, with failing breath,

Ennobled human nature; for since he
Who died in far Samoa by the sea,
There scarce hath come, through failure and success,
A braver spirit to the gates of death!

NATURE

I WEAVE the beginning, I fashion the end;
Life is my fellow, and Death is my friend;
Time cannot stay me,
Nor evil betray me, —
They that would harm me, unknowing, defend.

I ravel asunder, I knit every flaw;
Blossoms I scatter, with tempests I awe;
Birthplace of duty,
And shrine of all beauty, —
Firmly I govern, and love is my law!

UNBIDDEN

As shakes the breast of giant Kaf
When Allah's thunders near resound,
So nations quail before my wrath,
And shudder at its sound.

The broad Euphrates bears my name
To Oman's waves triumphantly;
The lordly Indus sings my fame
To the wondering Indian sea.

For me Khorasan tempers steel,
The Turkoman rears matchless steeds;
Azerbijan grows me her wine,

And luscious fruit for summer needs;
My peacock throne burns like a gem,
And stars blaze in my diadem.

The mighty vie to honor me:
Kings at my table humbly sit,
And tributary satraps fret
When banished over-long from it.

What then have I to do with thoughts
That blanch the cheek and chill the blood?
Some wretched slave may quake and start,
Who hast'ning through Ghilan's lone wood,
Hears ravening jackals distant howl, —
But I? Nay, who doth not revere
The brazen doors my guards defend?
Who dares, unsummoned, enter here?

Shall baseless terrors mock my peace,
And chide desired Sleep away?
Forbidding her to close mine eyes,
Tormenting me when I would pray?
The years are long; yet time hath sped,
And Earth forgets what once she knew,
For hidden far beneath her view,
The grasses wave above my dread.

The guests attend me. Wake, my will!
Put off this garb of sullen gloom!
The dead may neither wound nor blight;
And vengeance slumbers in the tomb.
Be thou but firm, and all 's secure:
Match well thy purpose to the hour,
Nor babble what is voiceless still, —
Not Eblis shall abase thy power!

. . . . . .

Heard you a knocking then, my lords?
No? — and the wind, you think, sounds so?
To me 't was as a stroke of doom,
Reverberate from some long ago.

Well, since 't was nothing, speed the cheer!
Nor sit like phantoms dull and mute,
For something which ye did not hear.

Ye thought me weary? So: and then?
Am I not mortal like the rest?
May I not falter in my mirth,
Nor palsy every guest? . . .

That knocking! — Ah! you note it now.
It vexed me men should disallow

A sound more dread than frenzy's shriek, —
And prate of a wind-blown bough !

. . . . . .

Thine errand, sirrah ! Who 's without
That may not be denied ?
A stranger ? And thou darest bring
His hests unbidden before thy king ?

A stranger ? Though his need be stout,
And stubborn as his pride,
Is 't here that he should seek our face ?
Command him to the appointed place,
And those who should provide !

Ha ! answerest thou ? Not be denied ? —
Grows life so worthless then ? —
Go drive him hence, thou tiresome knave !
. . . Friends, to our feast again !

This imbecile hath broke the cheer;
But day is distant yet,
And ere her joyless flags appear,
We 'll pay mad pleasure's debt.

Drink to all revels — foes to thought!
Drink, drink to poppy-trances deep!
And since from some sleep holds aloof,
To oblivion drink! — the dreamless sleep.

Again that sound affronts the air!
Ill-omened wretch, proclaim thy care —
My soul thy pallor hates!
What hounds thee back? Whence, whence this din?
The stranger? He hath passed the gates —
And waiteth there — within?

And waiteth there? . . . Admit him then:
Who hunts the panther to his den
Flies not the panther's rage.
. . . Fool! fool! Thou deem'st it wise to beard
Our fury? . . . Gods! the face I feared!

At height of bloom, so cometh blight.
Avaunt! avaunt, thou withering sight!
Eternal pains begin:
I swoon to Hell's abysmal night, —
Ah, horror! — Back, my Sin!

WAR

In the beginning was I born,
With man from out the dust;
And presently, from earth uptorn,
Came Cruelty and Lust.
Alway, the vassals of my will,
They twain go with me still.

Where'er my flashing sword they see,
Where'er they scent my breath,
Quickly they follow after me,
Bringing despair and death;
Yet still the mighty wear with pride
My liveries, crimson-dyed!

Once, long ago, in ages gone,
  When man seemed as the brute,
I looked with dread to wisdom's dawn,
  And virtue's ripening fruit:
Now sages wreathe my brow with bays,
And poets chant my praise.

And once, in little Bethlehem —
  Once only, not again —
Peace wore a royal diadem:
  But I could trust to men,
And crucified upon a tree,
Peace is a memory!

LOVE, REPROACHFUL

THEN Love, reproachful, sighed: "Art thou become

Voiceless, who in my praise wast eloquent?

To wound my name, unto high heaven is sent

A vain lamenting, — the exordium

Of fruitless plaint and chiding wearisome, —

While they to whom my chiefest joys are lent,

To worship me in silence are content!"

Love, even so: whom thou dost bless are dumb.

Listen! That strain of ecstasy and pain!

Far-echoing from Thrace, it breathes again,

Lost Philomela's passion to prolong;
Yet nested near in solitude, the dove —
Beneath thy very pinions, gracious Love!
Coos to her mate, but sings the world no song!

IN MEMORY

ELIZA SPROAT TURNER

How should we think of her as dead
Whose words to many are as daily bread?
How should we deem her gone
Whose help is not, and cannot be, withdrawn?
We do not mourn the orb as set
Whose shining beams are all about us yet!

Ah, no! They live indeed — the dead
By whose example we are upward led;
Nor was her service vain
Who gave herself — again and yet again —

And when her spirit was most sad,
Healed her deep hurt by making others glad.

She lived to bless: her generous mind
Despaired not of the humblest of her kind;
For in her heart was born
Love for the poor, unfriended, and forlorn,
Which, after love's perfected way,
Judged not itself of greater worth than they.

She lived to bless: love made her strong
To widen good, to limit hate and wrong,
To ease the path of woe;
And choosing in the Christ-like way to go,
The future held for her no fear,
Who, self-forgetting, made her heaven — here!

THE IRISH SHAMROCK IN SOUTH AFRICA

O LITTLE plant, so meek and slight,
Tinct with the emerald of the sea
Which like a mother, day and night,
Croons melodies to thee;
Emblem of Erin's hope and pride!
Though crushed and trampled under foot,
Thou still art found
The meadows 'round,
Up-springing from thine own sweet root!

Of sorrow thou hast been the sign
Through weary, unforgiving years;

The dews upon thy tender vine
Have seemed thy country's tears;
Now, now forevermore, thou art
Symbol of all that 's brave and true —
Blest as a smile
Of thy sunlit isle,
In the Old World honored, and the New!

For they lie asleep in a land of strangers,
Far from the home their fame endears —
The Inniskillings, the Connaught Rangers,
The Dublin Fusiliers;
And the little plant they loved so well —
Better than fairest flower that blows —
Is set apart
In Britannia's heart
With the Scottish thistle and the rose:

Is set apart, and never again
Shall human eyes the shamrock see
Without a thought of the heroes slain
Whose splendid loyalty,
Stronger than ancient hate or wrong,
Sublimed them 'midst the battle's hell, —
A tidal wave
From the souls of the brave,
That made them deathless as they fell!

GIFTS

One, in her service, patient wrought,
Striving a duteous faith to prove;
But at the last, her eyes still sought
The face of one who gave but love

Grateful, from one she daily drew
Strength to sustain her failing breath;
But at the last, her spirit knew
That love is more than life — than death!

"BREATHLESS WE STRIVE"

BREATHLESS we strive, contending for success,
According to the standards of our day.
What is success? Is it to find a way
Wealth out of all proportion to possess?
Is it to care for simple pleasures less
(While grasping at a more extended sway),
And sacrificing to our gods of clay,
Submerge the soul, at last, in worldliness?

By Grasmere stands a cottage small and poor:
The Dove was once its emblem, and the sign
That marked it as a wayside inn obscure;

But, frugal, dwelt high consecration here,
And grateful thought still guards it as a shrine,
Hallowed by that success which time but makes
more dear!

ADONIS

Love is dying; lay him low;
Pile the blossoms for his bed:
Here, where languid poppies blow,
Pillow soft his beauteous head!
Let their dream-breath float around him,
Even as my arms enwound him —
In the summer, long ago!

Say not it was yesterday!
Hours have been as years since then!
And shall rapture, fled away,
Never more return again?

Love, with throbbing heart of fire, —
Love, with thrilling voice and low, —
Hast thou quenchèd fond desire
In this breast of snow?

Then, O Death! I cry to you
From my grief immortal:
Goddess kind — of all most true —
Ope to me your portal!
In your calm my senses steep;
Close mine eyes, from tears grown dim;
Give me sleep — I ask but sleep —
In the grave, with him.

Can it be that flowers will spring
Where all lifeless Love shall lie?

Can it be that birds will sing,
Though Adonis die?

Never earthly bloom, I wis,
With his beauty could compare;
Never voice was sweet as his
Who lieth there;
And, thou blue Idalian sky,
Thou did'st smile upon our lot,
And I knew my love must die, —
But believed it not!

Whither now to take my way?
If I seek on mountains bare,
Or in caverns hid from day, —
Shall I find him there?
Will the rivers give him back,
Or the woods of Adon tell?

Will the hounds that loved him well
Follow in his track?
Ah, the distance matters not,
Nor the way I, mournful, tread:
Every path leads *from* the spot
Where my love lies dead!

COMPENSATION

When Winter's sovereignty complete
Has left us not a leaf to cull,
Then come the feathery snow and sleet:
So God doth love the beautiful!

RENEWAL

THESE sounds sonorous rolling!
These vibrant tones and clear!
Listen! The bells are tolling
The requiem of the year:
The year that dies, as mute it lies
Mid fallen leaves and sere!

Now by the fading embers
That on the hearthstone glow,
How sadly one remembers
The things of long ago:
The wistful things, with flame-bright wings,
That vanished long ago!

The self-effacing sorrow,
  The generous desire,
The pledges for the morrow,
  Enkindled at this fire! —
Enkindled here, O dying year!
  Where smoulders low thy pyre.

What hope and what ambition,
  What dreams beyond recall!
And look we for fruition,
  To find them ashes all?
Is life the wraith of love — of faith?
  Then let the darkness fall!

The sparks — how fast they dwindle!
  How faint their being glows!
Quickly the fire rekindle —
  Ah, quickly! e'er it goes!

Woo living breath from the lips of death! —
From ashes bring the rose!

. . . . . .

Kind God! The bells, in gladness!
The rose of hope hath bloomed!
For, consecrating sadness,
Life hath its own resumed,
And welcomes here the new-born year —
A phœnix, unconsumed!

KENILWORTH

TOWERING above the plain, proud in decay,—
Her tendriled ivies, like a woman's hair,
Veiling her hurt and hiding her despair,—
The monument of a departed day,
The shadow of a glory passed away,
Stands Kenilworth ; stripped of her pomp, and bare
Of all that made her so supremely fair
When Power with Love contended for her sway.

In this wide ruin solemn and serene,
Where moved majestical a virgin queen,

The peacock struts, his ominous plumes out-
spread;
And here, where casting an immortal spell
A sad and girlish presence seems to dwell,
The wild bird nests, and circles overhead.

OF FUTURE DAYS

I DO not ask to know
Whither thy spirit after death shall go;
I only ask that I — where'er thou be —
May follow thee.

All torment and regret
Thou, with thy love, couldst teach me to forget;
And heaven — Alas! what hope of heaven for me
Bereft of thee?

Nay: faithless doubt and fear
I lose in Him who gave thee to me, dear!
He would not so unite to rend apart,
Who made the heart!

DEMETER

THOU, thou hast seen the child I seek!
The vale is thine and the cloudy peak,
Divine Apollo
Whose eye doth follow
Each secret course! Ah, speak!

I have sued to the other gods in vain:
Thou wilt not disregard my pain;
But by thy power
Win back my flower
To gladden earth again!

Fair as the poppy amid the wheat, —
Her breath as the breath of the wild grape, sweet
In the twilight tender, —
She loved thy splendor
Of perfect day to greet.

And it is thou — of gods most dear! —
Thou, sun-god! who hast led me here:
Whose smile caressing,
My wrong redressing,
Tells me the Maid is near!

Blessèd, O blessèd, be thy light!
She comes from the shadows — blissful sight! —
To the breast that bore her,
To the yearning for her,
That fills me, day and night!

VITA NUOVA

WHAT miracle is here —
What vision of forgotten things and dear?
The grass — how green it lies in coverts deep!
The pussy-willows — sentinels of the wood —
How slim, how fair, each 'neath its downy snood,
They stand, new-waked from sleep!

And the enchantment cold
That seemed as death? Could it no longer hold
Against the glow that warmed the breast of Earth?

Hearken! what myriad little lives once more
Come knocking, knocking at the Mother's door,
Importunate for birth!

The trees, that look so bare,
Are conscious that the tender leaves are there —
Folded, yet faintly stirring in the bud;
And upward from each buried rootlet runs
The golden ichor, gift of vernal suns,
On swelling to the flood.

And, oh! thrice loved of yore —
Whence comes that note? It was not here before!
The white-throat! By what blest magician's art —

Flung out of silence, comes that clear appeal,
To make the jaded and insensate feel
New yearnings of the heart?

A something in the song
Shall hardly to a later strain belong —
A tremulous and naïve ecstasy
That moves the soul; which, eager then to live,
Petitions Life: "Ah, stay awhile, and give
A little heed to me!

"I, also, feel the Spring!
I, also, long to spread my wings and sing,
Unvexed by cares that canker and consume:
To hope, to dream, — ere winter come, to capture
The fleeting thrill, the fragrance and the rapture
Of beauty in its bloom!"

JOAN OF ARC

HER spirit is to France a living spring
From which to draw deep draughts of life. To-
day, —
As when a peasant girl she led the way
Victorious to Rheims and crowned the King, —
High and heroic thoughts about her cling,
And sacrificial faiths as pure as they,
Moving the land she loved, with gentle sway,
To be, for love of her, a better thing!

Was she unhappy? No: her radiant youth
Burned, like a meteor, on to swift eclipse;

But where it passed, there lingers still a light.
She waited, wistful, for the word of truth
That breathed in blessing from immortal lips
When earthly comfort failed, and all around was
night.

ROUEN: IN THE PRISON OF JOAN OF ARC

She laid her head upon the straw,
She who had crowned a king of France,
And angel shapes, whom no man saw,
For her deliverance,
Knelt at her feet — less pure, less sweet —
A blessing in each glance.

She laid her head upon the straw,
She who gave France her liberty,
And angel shapes, whom no man saw —
Ah me! how could men see? —
Watched till the day, then bore away
Something the flames set free.

"BLESSÈD"

BLESSÈD: so have they named her. With just
pride,
Deliberate care, and cautious circumstance,
The Holy Council have beatified
The Maid of Orleans, martyred child of France,
Who, at Domrèmy's village altar kneeling, —
Ignored by friend and foe,
Through all her young unsullied spirit feeling
The tears of a despairing people flow, —
Implored relief; and following the word
Which none save she had heard,
Delivered France, and crowned her — long ago.

Rejoice, Domrèmy, 'midst thy bowery green!
She was thine own, whom all, at last, would claim —
The greatest miracle that Earth hath seen
Since out of Nazareth a Saviour came.
Lowly as thou (though sheathed in armor bright),
Her soul was as the snow —
Yea, as the lilies of her banner, white.
The Church hath blessed her; but man's heart,
less slow,
Remembering her service and the price
Of her dear sacrifice,
Gave her the name of blessèd — long ago.

"GIVE ME NOT LOVE"

GIVE me not love which would inthrall
A spirit panting to be free;
But give me love which more than all
Would find it sweet to soar with me!
The bird that close to earth doth cling,
May, darkling, be content to sing,
But full the sunlight shines afar —
And there be heights where eagles are.

Give me not love which hour by hour,
Like to the rose, doth pale its hue;

But love still constant as the flower
Which opens to each morn anew:
Not love which, shadowed by the tomb,
A little space doth languid bloom,
But love which draws its deeper breath
From altitudes that know not death.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS MILLET

Not far from Paris, in fair Fontainebleau,
A lovely, memory-haunted hamlet lies,
Whose tender spell makes captive, and defies
Forgetfulness. The peasants come and go, —
Their backs too used to stoop, — and patient sow
The harvest which their narrow need supplies;
Even as when, Earth's pathos in his eyes,
Millet dwelt here, companion of their woe.

Loved Barbizon! With thorns, not laurels, crowned,
He looked thy sorrows in the face, and found —

Vital as seed warm nestled in the sod —
The hidden sweetness at the heart of pain;
Trusting thy sun and dew, thy wind and rain,
At home with nature, and at one with God!

MEMORY

If it be true, as some aver,
Whose wisdom naught endears,
That portioned to each human lot
Are fewer smiles than tears, —

Then, merciful Mnemosyne,
How great to thee our debt,
That we remember all our joys,
Our sufferings forget!

MOTHERLESS

He was so small, so very small,
That since she ceased to care,
'T was easy just to pass him by,
Forgetting he was there;
But though too slight a thing he seemed
Of interest to be,—
One heart had loved him with a love
As boundless as the sea.

He was so poor, so very poor,
That now, since she had died,
He seemed a tiny threadbare coat
With nothing much inside;

But, ah! a treasure he concealed,
And asked of none relief:
His shabby little bosom hid
A mighty, grown-up grief.

THE BURIAL OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON AT SAMOA

WHERE shall we lay you down to rest?
Where will you sleep the very best?
Mirthful and tender, dear and true —
Where shall we find a grave for you?

They thought of a spirit as brave as light,
And they bore him up to a lonely height,
And they laid him there, where he loved to be,
On a mountain gazing o'er the sea!

They thought of a soul aflood with song,
And they buried him where the summer long

Myriad birds his requiem sing,

And the echoing woods about him ring!

They thought of a love that life redeems,

Of a heart the home of perfect dreams,

And they left him there, where the worlds aspire

In the sunrise glow and the sunset fire!

"POOR LOVE!" SAID LIFE

"Poor Love!" said Life, "that hast nor gold,
Nor lands, nor other store, I ween;
Thy very shelter from the cold
Is oft but lowly built and mean."
"Nay: though of rushes be my bed,
Yet am I rich," Love said.

"But," argued Life, "thrice fond art thou
To yield the sovereign gifts of Earth —
The victor sword, the laureled brow —
For visioned things of little worth!"

"POOR LOVE!" SAID LIFE

Love gazed afar with dreamt-lit eyes,
And answered, "Nay: but wise."

"Yet, Love," said Life, "what can atone
For all the travail of thy years —
The yearnings vain, the vigils lone,
The pain, the sacrifice, the tears?"
Soft as the breath breathed from a rose,
The answer came: "Love knows."

AT DUSK

EARTH, mother dear, I turn at last,
A homesick child, to thee!
The twilight glow is fading fast,
And soon I shall be free
To seek the dwelling, dim and vast,
Where thou awaitest me.

I am so weary, mother dear! —
Thy child, of dual race,
Who gazing past the star-beams clear,
Sought the Undying's face!

Now I but ask to know thee near,
To feel thy large embrace!

Tranquil to lie against thy breast —
Deep source of noiseless springs,
Where hearts are healed, and wounds are dressed,
And naught or sobs or sings:
Against thy breast to lie at rest —
A life that folds its wings.

Sometime I may — for who can tell? —
Awake, no longer tired,
And see the fields of asphodel,
The dreamed-of, the desired,
And find the heights where He doth dwell,
To whom my heart aspired!

And then — But peace awaiteth me —
Thy peace : I feel it near ;
The hush, the voiceless mystery,
The languor without fear !
Enfold me — close ; I want but thee !
But thee, Earth-mother dear !

THE CLOUDS

The clouds give back to earth again
The moisture they absorb;
An atom floating in the sun
Is lasting as an orb.

We fear lest ill should fly itself,
And wrong at last prevail:
Lest good should lack its just reward
And light untimely fail:

We falter, and distrust the fate
We may not understand;

Interrogate the oracle,
When God is close at hand.

And still the clouds go drifting by,
Or fall in fruitful rain:
High over us the stars, undimmed,
Benignant shine again;

And from that temple, viewless, vast,
Where failure is unknown,
The Father of existences
Keeps watch above his own.

POEMS OF THE WAR FOR THE LIBERATION OF CUBA

AMERICA

Thy children are inspired by thee:
Blest by thy gift of liberty,
They go to make the wretched free,
Mother-land!

They were indeed not sons of thine
Could they withhold that gift divine;
Of liberty thou art the shrine,
Mother-land!

Thy children glory in thy name;
They write it, as with words of flame,
In deeds that put thy foes to shame,
Mother-land!

In deeds of daring unforecast,
In deeds of valor unsurpassed,
In deeds that make thee known at last,
Mother-land!

Thy strength it was that made them strong;
Thy justice taught them hate of wrong;
They are of thee, to thee belong,
Mother-land.

Their lungs are filled with thy sweet breath;
Thy voice they hear, and what it saith;
They love thee, and they fear not death,
Mother-land!

WELCOME

COME home! The Land that sent you forth
From East and West, from South and North,
Looks wistfully beyond her gates,
Extends her arms and waits — and waits!

At duty's call she stilled her woe;
She smiled through tears and bade you go
To face the death you would not shun.
Brave hearts, return! Your task is done.

Not as you journeyed come you back;
A glory is about your track

Of deeds that vanquished tyranny
And set a tortured people free:

Deeds, sprung of manhood's finest grace,
That envious Time will not efface;
Deeds that proclaim a Nation's worth,
And crown the Land that gave them birth.

America but waits to greet
And bless you, kneeling at her feet,
Your standards fair, in honor furled,
The proudest mother in the world!

Come home! The Land that sent you forth
From East and West, from South and North,
Looks wistfully beyond her gates,
Extends her arms and waits!

MEMORIAL ODE

Written by request of the City of Philadelphia for the Peace Celebration and read at Independence Hall, October 28, 1898.

THE peace we longed to keep
Our fate denied;
Reluctant we awoke, as from a sleep,
And saw the face of Duty deified.

We followed with dismay
The awful hand
That drew us, step by step, along the way
And pointed to an agonizing land.

Nearer it led and nearer
To dreadful death,
While ever to the spirit whispered clearer
A voice that promised something more than breath:

A voice that prophesied
Of victory,
Through mildness and compassion sanctified,—
Of conquest that ennobles and makes free.

America to-day
Binds in her hair
The olive and the undecaying bay:
An adult Nation, gloriously fair,

Who with a mother's pride
Her children gave,

Who feels their triumph, as her oceans, wide,
And sorrows for her unreturning brave.

Peace is their martyr-crown:
No length of years
Can chill her love or lessen their renown!—
But ah! her pæan falters, hushed in tears.

. . . . . .

Who are these advancing
With bugle note and drum,
Their bayonets far glancing?
Say, who are these that come?
They are thy sons, Great Mother!
Such sons hath any other?
Be comforted, and bless them as they come!

Be comforted! Though all
Respond not to thy voice,

Though thine impassioned call
Some answer not, nor hear, —
O Mother! with thy valiant ones rejoice,
Who died for Man, not glory,
And live in deathless story,
Joined to the names imperishably dear!

Blessèd who fall for Freedom,
Where her flag triumphant waves;
Blessèd who sleep in quiet,
With her laurel on their graves,
Remembered through the echoing years
And hallowed by a nation's thankful tears!
And blessèd, too, the living,
Who fill our hearts with hope and glad forgiving;
Who mid the battle's deaf'ning roar,
When fell the ranks like autumn leaves,

Guarded the standard of the free,
The ægis of our victory;
Who, fevered and anhungered, bore
The more appalling tests of tragic War,
And laureate return, and bring to us their
sheaves!

Warriors of the land
And warriors of the sea,
Bold to meet adversity
And constant to withstand;
Heroes of battle, hospital, and tent,
Men chivalrous and never tired,
Women devoted, love-inspired,
Who nursed to life the loyal ones you lent;
And ye — whom all must praise —
Ye darker children of the nation!

Who with a patriot hope and proud elation,
Faced danger that the stoutest heart dismays ;
And in the trench and on the mesa saw,
In memory, the men who fought with Shaw
For freedom, at the parting of the ways:
Thrice gallant souls! who in the van
Pressed forward, with one only plan —
One purpose, to prevail ;
And 'neath the Mausers' burning hail
Sprang dauntless to the grave,
Your whiter comrades' threatened lives to save :
Who, stumbling, falling, — forward, onward
still, —
Fought, step by step, up the dread hill,
Up to the crest where red the death-tide ran, —
Up to the high estate and dignities of Man!

Peace! Sound the drums! The great roll call!
Ah, many to Fame's clarion note
Make answer; but not all!
Yet ye, our brave! have planted seed —
Not for a day, but distant times remote,
Which priceless from the fruitful earth shall spring,
In harvest of pure thought and noble deed,
To bless the Land we love, immortal blossoming.

Into the unresponsive past
On wingèd feet the years fly fast:
Scarcely we pluck the blooms of May,
A shadow on the wold is cast,
And, lo! it is December;
Yet, as a light to guide our way,

Some visions of a troubled day
Gone by we still remember.

And one there is, one image, full of rest,
A memory of manhood singly blest,
The savior of our Nation and her Chief:
Matchless in judgment, love, compassion, power —
The Man meet for the hour.
Assailed by ignorance and half-belief, —
Each searching from too near a view
To read the soul of all our souls most true, —
He went his way, unselfish, minist'ring;
But in the bud and promise-time of Spring
He died — and then we knew.[1]

[1] Abraham Lincoln, April 15, 1865.

So in the years to come, when we shall sleep,
Tired pilgrims, at life's everlasting goal,
And the hid hands, that faithful minutes keep,
Shall all the record of our times unroll,
Our sons shall read, emblazoned on the scroll,
His name revered and great,
Who sways our continent with mild control:
Pilot whom war tempestuous could not whelm,
Who stood through every peril at the helm,
Guiding to peaceful port our Ship of State.
He neither needs our praise nor vindication,
Who in the coming years shall take his place
With the wise rulers of the English race;
A leader of the strength that fits a free-born nation![1]

[1] William McKinley, September 14, 1901.

America, my home! — how dear to-day!
In beauty and augmented splendor,
With smile of mother-love so tender
It doth each sacrifice for thee repay,
Thou standest regnant and secure,
Thy hands extended to the helpless poor,
Thy war-like brows unbent, thine armor laid away.

To love devoutly is to pray.
O Land! for thee in thy victorious hour
We lift our souls in supplication,
That righteousness may sanctify thy power
And fill thee with that purer exaltation
Which bides with those who highest hests obey.
Oh, may the lips that praise thy strength,
Laud thee for justice, rather, and for truth,

Welling immediate from thy heart of youth,
To bless thy children first, and all mankind at
length!

BUFFALO

A TRANSIENT city, marvelously fair, —
Humane, harmonious, yet nobly free, —
She built for pure delight and memory.
At her command, by lake and garden rare,
Pylon and tower majestic rose in air,
And sculptured forms of grace and symmetry.
Then came a thought of God, and, reverently, —
"Let there be Light!" she said; and Light was there.

O miracle of splendor! Who could know
That Crime, insensate, egoist and blind,

Destructive, causeless, caring but to smite,
Would in its dull Cimmerian gropings find
A sudden way to fill those courts with woe,
And swallow up that radiance in night?

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